

The McGill Daily

volume 86 • number 27

November 14 — 20, 1996

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Events

**Thursday,
November 14**

• WISE presents Medical School Information Night in Thomson House Ballroom, 19h. Info: 845-1160.

• LBGTW Womyn's Group meets in the Women's Union (Shatner 423). 18:30h

**Friday,
November 15**

• Yellow Door presents an evening of folk music featuring *The Echo Hunters*. 20h. Admission \$3

• LBGTW Coming Out Group meets in the basement of UTC (3521 University, near Milton). 17:30h

• LBGTW Men's Discussion Group meets in the basement of UTC (3521 University, near Milton) 19h. Food and drinks to follow.

**Saturday,
November 16**

• Yellow Door presents Doug Cox and Tammy Faessert. 19:30h Admission \$8

**Sunday,
November 17**

• Yellow Door presents Lorne Skodnick. Admission \$5.

**Monday,
November 18**

• Alliance for the Mentally Ill Québec Evening Support Group for families of the mentally ill, and for those with obsessive compulsive disorder and their families. 19:30h. 4333 Côte Ste. Catherine. Info: 486-1448.

...ongoing events on page 4

DO YOU WANT TO TEACH ENGLISH IN KOREA?

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WHO'S AFRAID OF QUEER EROTICA?

You may not know it, but the rubber stamp required to hang a poster on campus bulletin boards is actually a tool serving censorship. Unfortunately, the *Daily* wasn't aware of this until posters publicising the Queer Special Issue (Monday, November 11) were denied this stamp by the Students Society of McGill University (SSMU), the Engineering Undergraduate Society (EUS) and the Management Undergraduate Society (MUS).

The poster, containing an erotic photograph of two naked women embracing, was deemed "pornographic" by the SSMU, and "not the sort of thing we support" by the Engineering Undergraduate Society (EUS). The Management Undergraduate Society simply claimed to have "lost the stamp."

The only society which officially accepted the poster was the Arts Undergraduate Society (AUS). These posters, however, were ripped down within a few hours, despite the fact that they were put up personally by AUS President Tara Newell.

In the Shatner Building, the posters were refused on the grounds of policy 10.4 of the SSMU Policy Manual which states:

"The Students' Society of McGill finds pornography to be sexist, exploitive and degrading; pornographic magazines have been found to offend members of the McGill community and the Students' Society shall not participate in the marketing or distribution of sexist publications."

The logic at play here seems a bit skewed. An erotic photograph of two women, taken by a female photographer for a female audience can hardly be called sexist or degrading to women. In fact, it was the pure celebration of women's sexuality and women's desire for other women independent of sexist dynamics which prompted us to use the image in the first place.

Therefore, SSMU's interpretation of "pornographic" would seem to include anything remotely sexual, or suspiciously, anything homoerotic.

Assuming that we are all mature adults and do not squirm at the sight of bare-breasts or a blatant image of sexuality, then the only sensibilities that could

bulletin boards on any given day. You may find an advertisement for a bar depicting scantily dressed bar maids. You may find a travel promotion with a gratuitous drawing of men ogling a woman's raised skirt. These posters are neither torn down, nor even identified as "sexist" by the undergraduate society which gives them their stamp.

The censorship of the *Daily* poster not only highlights the recent backlash of homophobia that has ensued since the Red Cross 'scandal', but has served to echo the underlying sentiment that those sexualities that deviate from heterosexuality are 'fine' as long as they remain invisible.

What is perhaps even more frustrating is the haste with which the campus bureaucracies deemed the poster pornography without questioning their judgment or why they consider the image shocking.

Is a blatant display of female



be offended by the *Daily's* poster are those which are heterosexist and homophobic.

Look around on the campus



sexuality offensive? Are bare breasts and pubic hair offensive? Is desire degrading? Is sexuality and desire that is not male centric exploitative? Are these things a source of shame? To whom? Why?

In exercising our right to free press, it is our responsibility to challenge our readers with provocative ideas and images and to stimulate dialogue. The narrow-mindedness and hostility with which the posters were received is the posters' clear justification.

— comment by
**Meredith Cohen
and Mark Narron**

The McGill Daily

vol 86 • no 27

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by the *Daily* staff. Printed by Payette &

Simme, Montréal, Québec.

The *Daily* is a founding member of Cana-

dian University Press and Presse étudiante

du Québec.

Printed on 20% recycled paper.

ISSN 1192-4608

Hyde Park

WILL YOU STRIKE?

Over the last two weeks, we have repeatedly been asked: "What is McGill doing to do to show solidarity with striking CEGEPs?" The question leaves room for several answers, depending on which sector of McGill we are talking about.

If we are speaking of the McGill administration, the answer is, "Absolutely nothing." In fact, the administration is trying to do exactly what students are striking over: raise tuition and increase administrative fees.

The administration does not stand in solidarity with students. As Principal Shapiro admitted last year at the student forum, the administration's interests are not students' interests.

If we are speaking of McGill student government(s), the answer is "Plenty." McGill's Post Graduate Students' Society (PGSS) was at the table with the

Mouvement pour le Droit à l'Éducation (MDF) when the strike demands were set and the plan of action initiated. Together, the two bodies planned the October 24 demonstration which kicked off the whole movement.

Since then, the SSMU has been a vital part of the movement's growth, working with over 30 student associations in the Coalition Étudiante de Montréal Metropolitan to organise city-wide (Nov. 6) and province-wide (Nov. 20) demonstrations.

Both the SSMU and the PGSS have called general assembly meetings on November 18 to vote on a one day strike mandate. This brings us to the question of McGill students.

Will McGill students join the current student uprisings against the cuts to education and the imminent increase in tuition

fees? We fear the answer might be, "No".

The McGill turn out for the October 24 demo was low, and even lower for the November 6 demo. This is astounding, given that we have much to lose in the PQ's cutting frenzy and in the McGill administration's drive to privatise.

What are the causes for such apathy at McGill? Is it middle class despair, in which guilt and comfort paralyse? Is it a constant bombardment from mainstream media with the message that these cuts are inevitable, necessary and preventable? Is it some form of twisted solidarity with Ontario students who are now paying almost double what McGill students pay, as a result of the Harris government's sacrifice of publicly funded programmes for the sake of a tax break? Or is it just a lack of knowledge about the issues?

What ever the causes, we call on you, the students of McGill University, to vote on whether or not to hold a one day strike on November 20 in conjunction with a province-wide demonstration.

Both the PGSS and the SSMU will hold their general meetings on November 18, 1996 at 12:30. The SSMU meeting will be held in the Shatner Ballroom, and the PGSS meeting will be held in the Thomson House Ballroom.

Whether you are for or against a strike, we encourage you to come out and make your position known.

Erin Runions, VP- External Affairs, PGSS
Anna Kruzynski, VP- University Affairs, PGSS
Chantal Da Silva, VP- External Affairs, SSMU
Chris Carter, President, SSMU

MCGILL'S RESPONSE TO TA UNION: PAY CUTS

Overwork, vast pay disparities, underpay, rampant favoritism and intimidation are among some of the many complaints which drove McGill's Teaching Assistants (TAs) to form a union in January 1993.

AGSEM, the newly formed TA union, drafted a proposed contract that would address the concerns of TAs at McGill. It would correct 10 years of decreasing real salaries and unpaid overtime worked by TAs, and correct the 200% pay inequities between departments.

Through the collective bargaining process, the University has addressed a few of the non-monetary concerns submitted by AGSEM, but two and a half years of negotiations have not resolved a single monetary issue.

At first, AGSEM expected no less than what the many other unionised TAs across Canada had obtained in their contracts. However, after much grumbling over financial woes by the University administration, AGSEM conceded that a contract similar to that of York University, University of Toronto or McMaster University may be unattainable, and considered possible alternative proposals.

At this point, AGSEM concentrated its efforts on raising the salary of the poorly paid departments to an acceptable standard which would allot only a small increase for all other TAs. The University refused to discuss such a position.

From its inception, AGSEM has fought hard for equity amongst all TAs across campus. However, McGill claimed it could not afford equity and made counterproposals that would entrench inequity into the TA contract.

AGSEM discussed this issue with its members and decided that if equity must be sacrificed at the altar of debt reduction, then it wanted some discussion on how it should be done.

After some painful and difficult debate, AGSEM agreed to discuss informally the possibility of inequity across campus but demanded immediate equity within faculties with incremental salary increases to phase in acceptable equitable salaries over the life of the contract.

Things looked hopeful; this enormous compromise on the part of AGSEM waited with anticipation for the next meeting with McGill at which point this informal proposal would be dis-

cussed again.

The anticipation quickly turned sour when the University informally presented a salary position that would result in more than 50% of TAs taking a pay cut, the discontinuation of all tuition fee waivers for future TAs and no protection from overwork.

To add insult to injury, AGSEM calculated the total cost of the University's position and

found that the proposal would cost the University less than what it spent on TAs today.

Such an assault by the University on AGSEM's efforts to negotiate in a fair and enlightened manner was nothing short of a kick in the teeth. After 10 years without pay raises and two and half years of negotiations, the best the University could do was cut our pay and further exploit our members.

AGSEM felt dejected and foolish to have believed that a negotiated settlement was attainable. It was at this point that AGSEM realised that filing for Arbitration was the only course to a fair contract.

**Elaine MacDonald AGSEM
Bargaining Committee
Member
Ph.D. Candidate
Dept. of Civil Engineering**

letters

Give DuMaurier the full boot

To the Daily,

I wholeheartedly applaud your boycott of tobacco advertising as outlined in the comment of November 4 ("Full colour ads aren't worth the price"). I was wondering, though, if you were going to make this a retroactive boycott. It appears that there are numerous *Daily* distribution bins around campus with the DuMaurier name emblazoned on the front. Given, someone has attempted (and failed) to conceal the name with purple marker, so I know your hearts are in the right place, but the fact remains that these are gifts from a tobacco advertiser. If you were the *Daily* in its truest morally upright sense, you would get rid of these bins. Do not give DuMaurier the satisfaction of remaining on campus thanks to McGill's advocacy newspaper.

**Tim Castano
U3 English**

To the Arts T.A.. who wrote the *Daily* a letter concerning statements prepared by the McGill Administration and the T.A. union (AGSEM) negotiators: please come down to the *Daily* office to discuss it with us.

Our policies:

Letters

The *Daily* publishes all letters by members of the Daily Publications Society that are typed or on disk, 300 words or less, libel-free, and signed by the author showing year and faculty. All students registered at McGill University are members of the Daily Publications Society. Anonymity can be arranged when necessary — talk to an editor before-hand. The *Daily* reserves the right not to publish letters deemed racist, homophobic and/or sexist.

Hyde Parks

The *Daily* accepts opinion pieces in the form of a Hyde Park. Hyde Parks must be under 500 words, libel-free, and signed by the author or group. The *Daily* will not publish Hyde Parks it deems to be racist, homophobic and/or sexist. The *Daily* cannot guarantee publication of all Hyde Parks.

ONGOING EVENTS

• The McGill Women's Union Christmas clothing and food drive for Project Chance (a housing project for single mothers in school). Needed: Food items

• The McGill Debating Union has a show round on Monday nights in Shatner 302 at 18h. All welcome. No experience necessary.

• The Sexual Assault Centre of McGill Students' Society offers a confidential listening Help Line, 398-8500, 18h-24h, 7 nights/week. Free support groups, information, and referrals are available. Info Line: 398-2700.

• The Cancer Research Society

needs volunteer gift wrappers. All funds go towards cancer research. Info: Nancy, 861-9227.

• Tel-Aide listening service needs volunteers. Info: 935-1105.

• Network of Hope Brain Tumor Support Groups on first and third Monday of every month at the Montréal Neurological Hospital (3801 University), 19h-21h45. Info: 398-1916.

• The Sexual Assault Centre of McGill Student' Society seeks male facilitators for a support group for male survivors of sexual assault. Info: 398-2700, 10-17:30h, Mon-Fri.

• The Canadian Studies

Graduate Students' Association announces a call for papers for the Third Annual Canadian Studies Conference. Submissions welcomed from all graduate students in all fields who are interested in the study of Canada. Deadline for abstracts is Friday, 2 December. Info: 398-2974.

• Head and Hands needs volunteer tutors for high school students. Subjects covered include French, English, Math, Science, etc. Info: 481-0277.

• If you would like to volunteer to be trained as a literacy tutor, contact Literacy Partners of Québec at 931-8731 ext. 1413.

• Afternoon and evening bereavement support and self-help groups are being offered free of charge for anyone who has suffered the loss of a family member or friend. Info: 398-7067.

• Loaf Organic Food Co-op orders produce and bulk dried goods on Mondays, 14:30 - 18:30, at 3647 University. Info: 398-7432.

• Bordeaux Jail Protestant Chaplaincy invites students to form pastoral support group to visit preventative detention inmates. Thursdays 13-16h. Info: Gwenda Wells, 398-4104.

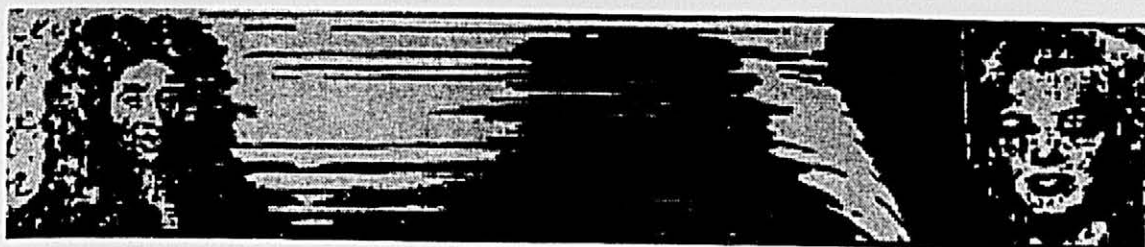
• International Buy Nothing

Day is November 29. Interested in participating in a swap? Info: QPIRG at 398-7432 or Jen at 2820-4594.

• For STD Awareness month, McGill Student Health Services (Powell Building, 3637 Peel, room 100) is offering condoms for low prices.

• Friends of the Lubicon is holding an art show to fund its fight against Daishowa a multinational companies currently exploiting the natural resources of the unceded Lubicon Cree Nation in Alberta. For info about submissions: 416-763-7500.





THE MAN (DÉ)MODÉ

The 1660s collides with the 1960s in
The Man of Mode

by danielschneitman

Whatever you want: fashion, fad or fetish, the main stage show for the fall season *The Man of Mode* has it all. This witty and dynamic play directed by Myrna Wyatt Selkirk innovates Restoration-style comedy by giving it a radically contemporary spin.

The intrigue of the plot looks more like the part of the script that was cut from Hollywood's box office hit *Dangerous Liaisons*. It consists of a series of interrelated amusements and games of malice and affection, of aversion and passion, and of ambition and zeal. The games revolve around the lustful and wanton Mr. Dorimant (the English version of Don Juan) played by Michael McNicholas. Between love letters, generation gaps, collusion, marriages and sexual insinuations, a battle of pride, prestige and reputation is fiercely fought on the turf of the idle royal nobility in 17th century England.

However, behind the delicacies of the play filled with symbolism and intimation, *The Man of Mode*, in its essence, has a more meaningful aspect. It trifles with the gender power struggle (this topic in the McGill community appears to be resurgent lately — *Sex Tips For Modern Girls* was just recently in production) which western civilization, apparently, has carried through the beginning of time to today. It portrays men which are *démodé* or unfit for the ideal of a society with gender equality. However, director Myrna Wyatt Selkirk warns that the critique should not be stretched too far: "This is not a feminist play none of the restoration plays were." Nonetheless, the play portrays somewhat of a reality in the relations between women and men, and exposing

this reality might yield some insightful critiques.

Written by the father of the Restoration comedy of manners, Sir George Etherege (1635-1692), around 1668, has definitely not been enough to make the play obsolete or outdated. The extravagant and even debauched nature of his plays reveals much of Sir George's personal life: *The*

and rebellion.

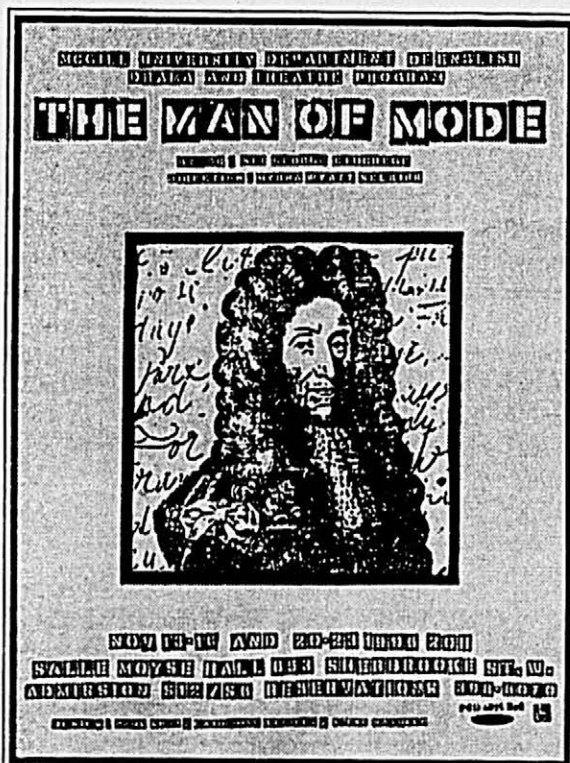
This link with the 1960s is wonderfully illustrated by the highly stylised and colourful wardrobe designed by wardrobe manager Catherine Bradley. The vibrant colour motif of the set adds even more credibility to the '60s look, and the soundtrack features many late '60s hits which played an important role in connecting the many acts of the play. Technically, the show ran very smoothly.

The *mise en scene* included many subsets of actions giving the spectacle a constant dynamism. The narrative structure used both conventional dialogue and more alternative ways for passing information such as monologue towards the public (in the form of the characters' thoughts), movement using the set and sometimes using picture-like montage sub-scenes to convey the mood of the plot. The acting was generally well done except for the occasional mix-ups on some lines

(but hey, it was the preview; give them a break). The performances of Oliver Van Praet as Mr. Medley and Stanleigh Siobhan Byrne as Harriet are specifically outstanding and noteworthy.

This play shows the large extent to which history can be cyclical in terms of social mores and even fashion for that matter. So whether you are interested in sexual intrigues, gender critiques, or you just want to have a plain old laugh, *The Man of Mode* will definitely will give you lots to talk about.

The Man of Mode is playing at Moyse Hall (in the Arts building) from November 13-16 and 20-23 at 8:00PM. Reservations or inquiries at 398-6070.



Man of Mode for example was written during his stay in the courtyards of Turkey where he was "assisting" the ambassador. Knighted by the King James II and familiar with the "attaché" duties in high society circles, Sir George was a man of mode himself. His and passionate zest for the pleasures of life was manifest in the need for liberation from the puritan repression that dominated England only decades ago.

Here the allusion to the 1960s becomes apparent and quite fruitful. Then too, the conservative post-war "family values" weighed so heavily on the new generation's back, that the result was our well known '60s explosion of pop culture, the free love revolution, deconstructionism

Karen Michetti, B.A., B.C.L., L.L.B.
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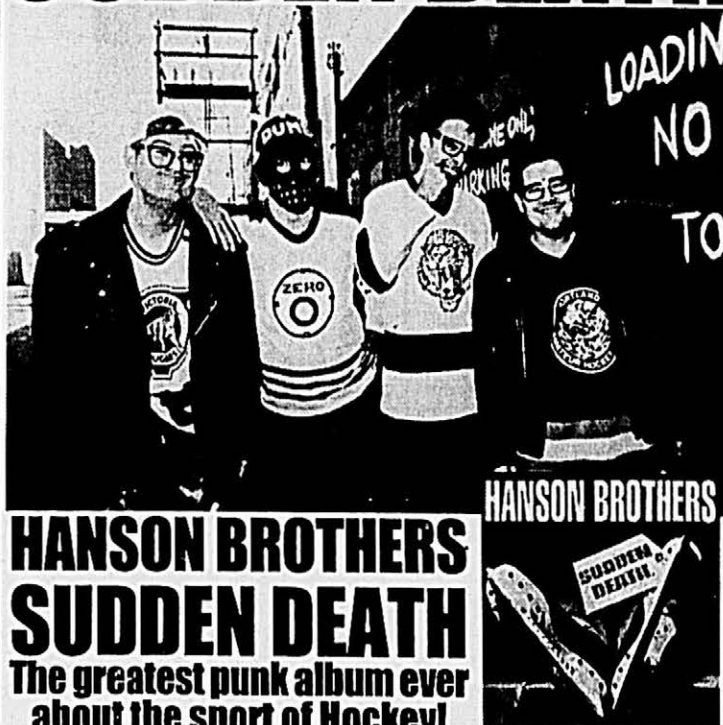
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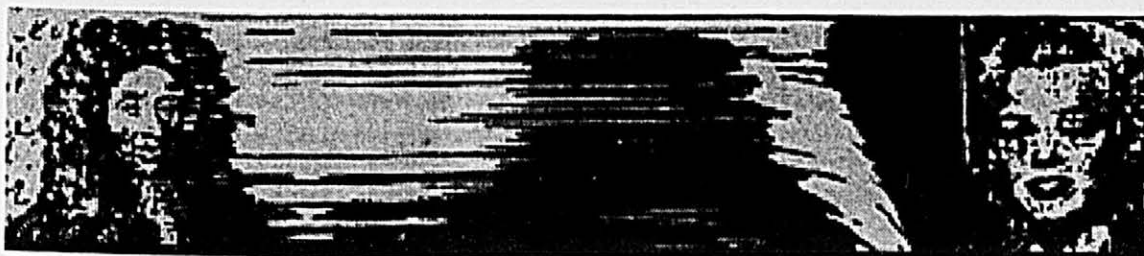
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November 14—20, 1996

The McGill Daily Culture

5



CHANNEL ZERO'S DIET OF D

The failure of the latest a

by gilshochat

Why is it that independent 'alternative' media (we at the *Daily* being of course immune to this) has a such a snooty, holier-than-thou attitude towards its mainstream cousins, be they in print, radio or TV?

It sees itself as the pure voice of the people, uncorrupted by the crass commercialism and virtual slavery to the bottom line that the commercial networks and journals are subjected to. What

these somewhat pretentious counterculture media types often fail to see is that the alternative media is equally vulnerable, if not to the gods of money, then to the 'diet of dreck', sensationalism and plain old bad taste.

A new outfit out of Toronto peddling the latest 'alterno-fad', Channel Zero video magazine bets that people (namely us fickle 18-24 year olds) will pay \$19.99 to watch three hours of cutting edge, commercial free, magazine-style video documentaries.

Sounds good on paper, right? Well, just like Preston Manning's new hairdo, this attempt at alterno-chic falls flat on its face. Stephen Marshall, the creator, filmmaker and big boss at Channel Zero, deserves much of the credit for creating the video-magazine idea. The concept behind this medium is that a filmmaker, backed by a bare bones crew, will go into the world's 'hotspots' and general places of interest which the mainstream media has ignored — in this case, Yugoslavia, South Africa and Belize — and shoot "guerilla-style documentaries" from the "street perspective" in an attempt to "empower" the video medium.

The problem with Channel Zero is simple — what it covers and the way it covers it. You can't expect to be taken seriously as an alternative media outlet by making your opening documentary a 'searing' in-depth report on the hidden CIA, Mafia connection and involvement in killing Nicole in the O.J. Simpson case. This piece of 'investigative reporting' — Marshall's idea of a Spinal Tap-esque joke — wears very thin as the piece goes on for what seems like an eternity and any vestige of humour quickly evaporates.

Claiming to be free from the shackles of the corporate

agenda, Channel Zero's first issue, *Planet Street*, goes on to unashamedly uncover the hidden 'truth' behind the missing glove and the bloody footprints. Channel Zero tries to be a cutting



edge version of *Frontline* or a savvy peer to *Manufacturing Consent*, but it fails miserably by devoting time and resources to investigating O.J. or, as on another piece, some guy growing hydroponic pot in Amsterdam.

After O.J., Channel Zero 'takes us' to one of the world's hotspots: Slovenia, a newly independent republic of the former Yugoslavia. Here Channel Zero is going to explore the neo-Nazi skinhead problem. Finally, I thought, some in-depth, hard-hitting, relevant documentary filmmaking — now we're

getting to the good stuff.

The piece begins well enough, if a little sensationally, by exploring the actions of the German government in the early 1990s and its actions in the Balkans, specifically its re-arming and training of Croatian troops during the Yugoslav war in an effort to expand the sphere of influence that the Germans had historically held in the region. Moreover, the piece raises the eerie spectre of German expansionism in Europe. This, I thought, is what alternative media is supposed to do; namely report important, newsworthy events that the mainstream media — in North America, at least — has left completely uncovered.

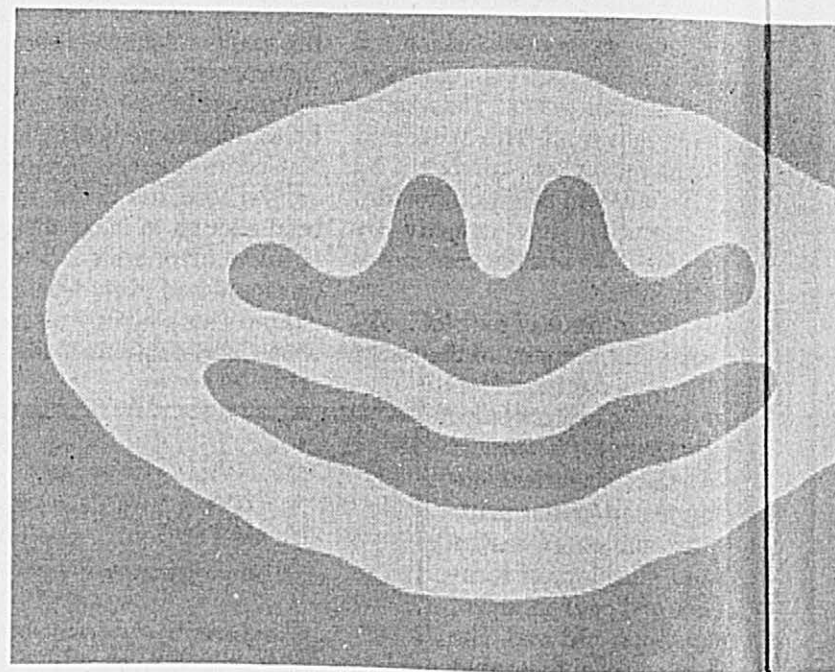
From this point onwards, however, the piece goes almost completely to hell. Rather than follow his original line of investigation and give us an in-depth exploration of the motives behind Germany's actions, Marshall abruptly turns the camera to a pack of half-drunken neo-Nazi skinheads in a loud, smoky Slovenian beer garden. Marshall thus begins to prod them into spewing the standard Nazi white power fare and, bottoms-up, the piece is over. Wait, did I miss something? Marshall could have gotten the same effect by taking his camera down to a local pool

hall and interviewing a bunch of stoned good ol' boys. No need to pretend at being relevant by just going to a foreign country.

Beyond the lacklustre content, the aesthetic quality of the film left a bad taste in my mouth. The attempt at artistry by using a jerky handheld camera left me feeling like I was watching

bag.

The idea behind the Global Video magazine is a good one, combining the documentary medium with the magazine with the video. Moreover, it's commercial free. On the other hand, do we need another mediocre media production company that produces shoddy



Rambo (the classic *First Blood: Part One*, of course) in a 747 at 25,000 feet altitude going through severe turbulence. I was left feeling nauseous, groping unsuccessfully for the courtesy

'docudramas' in a world already saturated with information and low-brow entertainment outlets?

The Toronto Sun and *The Globe and Mail* seem to think that this

RAPE DOESN'T DISCRIMINATE

Victims of lesbian trophy rape fall through the cracks

by soniaverma

As a means of exerting power and control, sexual assault has typically been used and recognised as an expression of hatred towards women. But for the one in three queer women who can expect to be raped in her lifetime, sexual assault takes on a whole new meaning.

"Sexual assault of any kind is horrifying, but when a lesbian or bisexual woman is raped, her experience is necessarily different from a heterosexual woman — the motivation can be different," explained Richard, a rape crisis counsellor with The New York City Gay and Lesbian Anti-Violence Project (AVP).

Richard says that misogyny and homophobia intersect in cases of lesbian 'trophy rape'. A queer woman is sexually assaulted by a heterosexual man with the intention to 'convert her'.

In Canada, the crime has been scarcely documented, and infrequently reported according to Bruce Watts, with the Ottawa Police department's bias crimes unit. "We have never heard of it before — other than in media reports," he commented.

But that is not to say that lesbian 'trophy' rape doesn't occur. Councilors at Montréal rape crisis centres were unable to comment on how many cases they have encountered. "The statistics tell us very little since the number of rapes reported is not an accurate indicator of how many rapes are actually taking place," says Claudine Roy, who works at the centre.

And according to the New York City Gay and Lesbian Anti-Violence Project (AVP), thousands of lesbians are sexually assaulted and raped every year.

The assault does not end with the physical attack, Roy points out. Rape crisis councilors cite the far-reaching, institutionalised homophobia extending from the police station to the hospital to the courtroom.

Examples include heterosexist questions asked by hospital staff which include "do you use birth control?" and "When did you last have intercourse?" Heterosexist assumptions are built into these standardised questions which explicitly ignore the realities of lesbian existence.

Such treatment might help explain why queer women are less likely to seek professional help following a sexual assault than heterosexual women. Marilyn MacLean, a Toronto Rape Crisis counselor comments, "a lot of lesbian women fear that they may not be taken seriously. We have already seen evidence that lesbians receive less adequate health care than other women."

Heterosexist assumptions not only jeopardise the healing process, but also undermine the likelihood of a woman's case ever reaching the courtroom. If a woman chooses to press charges, a hospital visit is necessary to document the assault. If queer women are deterred from going to the hospital because of discriminatory treatment, the number of 'trophy' rape cases which make it to the courts is correspondingly reduced.

On the legal front, MacLean says the issue is one of

credibility. "Where and how a woman is assaulted is enormously," she asserts. In a survivor's allegation, a woman's credibility is scrutinized by both the medical and legal systems, but impossible to ignore.

MacLean cites a recent sexual assault case where a woman was counseling a lesbian who had been raped. The woman was asked to take the stand, "her credibility was in question, her not to act like a lesbian."

Such attitudes are propagated by the media's notion that rape doesn't happen to "strong" women. It is posed to be really strong, physically strong, "nerve" to that sort of thing, "confidence."

This in turn contributes to a woman's fear that if she is raped, she will be made to feel like she is not taken seriously. People think that gay bashing doesn't involve lesbians. "It's not a crime," says a woman at the 519 Church Street Community Centre.

Currently, cases of lesbian 'trophy' rape are rarely reported. If there is evidence of a sexual assault, the sentence is increased, but legal action is rare.

Baldwin asserts that the justice system's different experiences of women's violence are not taken into account. "It's not hate at work and it's not hate in this."

DRECK

st alterno-fad

fresh new media outlet justifies the lacklustre content, but I remain unconvinced. Channel Zero sacrifices its documentaries' quality and relevance for looks, packaging and entertainment. Not to say that documentaries need not be entertaining. One needs only to watch the late '80s underground hit by Michael Moore (of *T.V. Nation* fame),

Roger and Me, to see that relevance and humour can mix even when such subjects as plant shutdowns and mass unemployment are being covered. Unfortunately, Channel Zero takes the MTV approach to documentaries by churning out a product that's hip and cool, but has the intellectual intensity of cottonballs.

Planet Street is available now at various retail outlets. The next installation, This is Channel Zero, should be released in early December (if they don't keep pushing the release date back).

ATE

and how an assault is reported matters. In establishing the legitimacy of a woman's 'character' is subjected to medical and legal establishments where discrimination are difficult to prove, more.

Recent sexual assault case where she was who had been raped. When it was time and, "her crown attorney basically told lesbian."

propagated by a false popular perception that happen to lesbians. "Lesbians are strong, physically unattractive and invulnerable," comments MacLean.

tributes to a wider invisibility where "lesbian-like they don't exist by a system which fails to see as gay bashing and sexual assault. Some bashing doesn't involve women and sexual assault on lesbians," says Karen Baldwin from the Community Centre in Toronto.

lesbian 'trophy' rape are tried as cases of evidence of a hate crime taking place, used, but legally, the crime remains one of

at the justice system must recognise "the of women versus lesbians. There are laymen and it's important that the system recog-

APPLYING THE ARTS

INTERNET

Place des Arts online continues the trial and error process

by mikecullen

A click of a button at any Internet search engine will yield plenty of colourful sites on the arts, but the content is literally what-you-see-is-what-you-get (hence the acronym, WYSIWYG). In arts-related sites, that varies greatly as the popularisation of the World Wide Web as information-delivering medium continues. However, the new Place des Arts site also raises important issues such as advertising on arts web pages, the reach of certain arts to online audiences, and listings choices that are becoming increasingly specific.

The virtual extension of the Place des Arts complex, which is defined in the physical world by the block containing the Musée d'art contemporain and its accompanying bunker-like structures, www.pda.qc.ca represents a evolutionary direction that bears watching.

Most strikingly, the multitude of pages are devoid of the advertisements that riddle other heavily frequented sites, a feature most welcome to the weary Internet voyager. Instead, physical advertising at the Complexe itself is solicited on the "Art of Being Seen" page. A sight for sore eyes? Surely. But this situation will not last, according to site administrator Andrée Tait. "Advertisers [on the web site] are most welcome. We're hoping to have that."

It seems that even arts on the internet cannot avoid the shadow of corporate advertising and sponsorship that plagues the real world.

This is not to say that the arts should be expected to be self-sufficient, to survive without commercial revenue, but it is a point of contention that all the arts must deal with — on and off the Internet.

Advertising is not the only juggling act that the site considers; listings of art events raises questions of scope. Included on the page entitled "The Arts Web" is a search engine for arts descriptors (composer, production title, etc.) and events listings for the city, province and outside Québec.

Place des Arts runs listings for other arts events on this link but only if associated with a professional production or a traditional arts (performing or otherwise) venue, according to Tait.

In an effort to be all-encompassing, the listings of Place des Arts apparently could not reconcile the calendars of publicly recognised events with the smaller,

local ones. The greater geographical range that arts listings on the internet usually provide is indicative of the poor fit of small productions and online media.

Local arts events may be more concerned with the mainstays of media circulations like newspapers and radio. Word-of-mouth probably occupies a larger space in the consciousness of small-time arts publicists than computers communications.

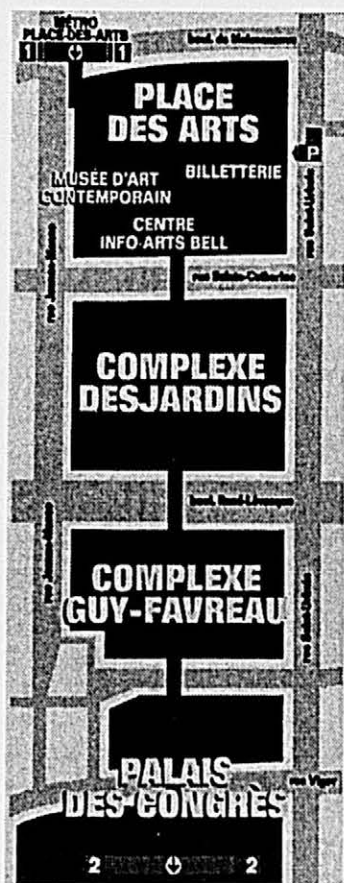
This awareness problem doesn't preclude the fact that a handful of local arts events are on the Web and could potentially be found, using the PDA search engine.

For all its subtle shortcomings, however, the PDA web site does have an impressive array of links that could replace a trip to Webcrawler or Magellan with a visual zap to boot.

The innovation of links that open onto smaller windows in your web browser allows surfers to keep the main pages in sight while following links. No more forgetting where you came from. Also, the use of graphic "ribbons" around the page, along with the usual boxes, illustrate each subject appropriately.

So Graphically well couched, the site shows no sign of the bygone era of grey backgrounds allowing you to see, through Places des Arts, computing at its state of the arts.

The Place des Arts web site can be reached at <http://www.pda.qc.ca>.



PSSST,

WANNA BUY

A NUKE?

Canada eases environmental rules to sell nuclear reactors

by samermuscatti

OTTAWA (CUP) — The federal government is watering-down its environmental rules to ensure the sale of two Canadian nuclear reactors to China.

The Liberal cabinet plans to amend the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act to exempt the \$4 billion Candu reactor sale from full environmental scrutiny. Prime Minister Jean Chretien is expected to finalise the sale when he visits China later this month.

"The government is behaving undemocratically and irresponsibly by doing this," said Kristen Ostling, co-ordinator for the Campaign for Nuclear Phase Out.

"They are gutting the environmental assessment process in order to promote the interests of the Canadian nuclear industry."

Environment and Human Rights groups are outraged the government is flouting its own rules to sell reactors to a country whose Human rights record has often been criticised by the West. They are also worried that nuclear aid is being provided to a country known for exporting weapons technology to other countries, such as North Korea and India.

But Trade Minister Arthur Eggleton told the House of Commons countries should not impose their environmental laws on other countries. He also said that 100 Canadian companies will profit from the deal, and would create the equivalent

of 27,000 jobs a year for Canada.

Environment Minister Sergio Marchi added that the 700-megawatt Candu reactors are extremely safe and are less environmentally detrimental than the coal plants China currently uses for most of its energy needs.

He says that if China doesn't buy the nuclear technology from Canada, they will buy it from other countries that might be less concerned with the environment.

"If we're not in there, [France] will sell them the reactor. Is the French reactor as good as ours? I believe not," said Marchi.

But that comes as little comfort to environmentalists who say the deal will further compromise Canada's status as a world-promoter of the environment and human rights. They have launched a letter-writing campaign in an attempt to stop the deal.

Reform MP Jim Hart says the government is breaking its Red Book election promises on the environment, which pledged to strengthen the enforcement of the environmental protection act.

"Instead of scrapping Canada's environmental laws to benefit China, should Canada not urge China to change its laws?"

Chretien wants to make the signing ceremony on behalf of federally owned Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd., the centrepiece of his visit to China. Canada will also provide a \$1.5 billion loan to help seal the deal.

PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MYTH

Is Leonardo DiCaprio the best of the new breed?

by julienlapointe

At 22, Leonardo Di Caprio is the most exciting actor of contemporary American cinema, and he might become the greatest. His latest film, *William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet*, casts him as Shakespeare's famed amorous youth. The picture is an engrossing spectacle, yet Di Caprio seems almost too good for it. He is so superlative that the film's limits are strikingly evident. Ironically, though, the picture's flaws are also its virtues.

The director, Baz Luhrmann, over-stages the work to such melodramatic excess, the hyperbole is poetic. The action is set in modern day Los Angeles, although the script nonetheless retains Shakespeare's sixteenth/seventeenth century English. The transposition of archaic dialect to a contemporary era, matched with slap-dash editing and rapid-fire camera movements, gives the film an eerie sense of temporal displacement. This *Romeo and Juliet* belongs to no time or place. The LA we are shown is a sumptuous, fantastic, *kitsch*-kingdom, with bright colours and loud, gaudy music. The style is overwrought, but rightfully so. What better way to express Shakespeare's theme of naïve adolescents lost in their tragically blind love, than to have the characters lost in a far away world where nothing is real?

William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet is astute and captivating, which is precisely why it falls short of the original play's greatness. The film is too excellent for its own good, which may be why Di Caprio outclasses it. Luhrmann directs with great force, but unfortunately without much grace. The love scenes between Romeo and Juliet are moving, but only to the extent that they comply to dramatic conventions. Luhrmann's directing is so self-consciously skillful that emotional spontaneity and human warmth recede as stylistic flawlessness and cold formalism take over. There's something disturbingly contrived and inauthentic about this picture: it has not a breath of emotional sincerity. And when Di Caprio arrives on scene, so eloquent and natural, he brings a faint air of foreboding. We fear this movie will never be able to contain him. It almost doesn't.

Leonardo Di Caprio is now in the unfortunate position of being a rising star in Hollywood, while simultaneously being far

too good for Hollywood. His actual worth as an actor, though, is often disputed. He received due praise for his intelligent portrayal of a mentally-handicapped adolescent in *What's Eating Gilbert Grape?* (1993). But *The Quick and the Dead*, *The Basketball Diaries* and *Total Eclipse* (all released in 1995) brought him negative, and sometimes angry, reviews.

The first two are mediocre pictures, respectively a fatuous star vehicle for Sharon Stone and a dramatically obscure biography of poet Jim Carroll's early teenage years. In them Di Caprio is lost, the superficial material giving him so little to work with, he finds nothing better to do than overact to the point of self-parody. But *Total Eclipse*, a biography of the 19th century revolutionary French poet Arthur Rimbaud, is a great movie. Critics deemed the picture gratuitously bombastic, never realising that it was remarkably faithful to Rimbaud's life. Cast in the central role, Di Caprio gives his most moving performance.

As portrayed by Di Caprio, Rimbaud is a passionate artist who thrives on the obsessiveness of his own arrogance. He has the cocky glare in his eyes of a still immature adolescent (Rimbaud composed all his work before the age of 21). He knows he's a genius and thereby assumes he has the right to mistreat anyone who isn't as smart as him. Di Caprio doesn't deny that Rimbaud was a great poet because he had the impudence, and the folly, to project a vain, glorified image of himself which he strove to live up to. But Di Caprio doesn't make Rimbaud unlikeable. He charges his character with such charismatic passion, he's simultaneously offen-

sive and brilliant. He's a legend in his own right, and we fall in love with his grandeur.

The significant quality of Di Caprio's acting which makes him the ideal performer to play Rimbaud or Romeo is a shrewd blending of cynicism and youthful innocence. Actors such as Johnny Depp and the late River Phoenix can express an odd, eccentric, yet spontaneous naïvety, so true to the childlike foolishness and vulnerability of adolescence. But Di Caprio's characteristic trait of self-

He is not without limits, however, for Di Caprio's acting only truly flourishes when a role is in perfect keeping with his own particular sensibility. Unlike the three generations of Method actors which have preceded him (from Brando to De Niro to Cage), Di Caprio doesn't theorise in any way about his work. He hardly undertakes the strenuous activities of mental preparation for a role that Method actors are reputed for. Whereas a Method actor evacuates his personality when acting

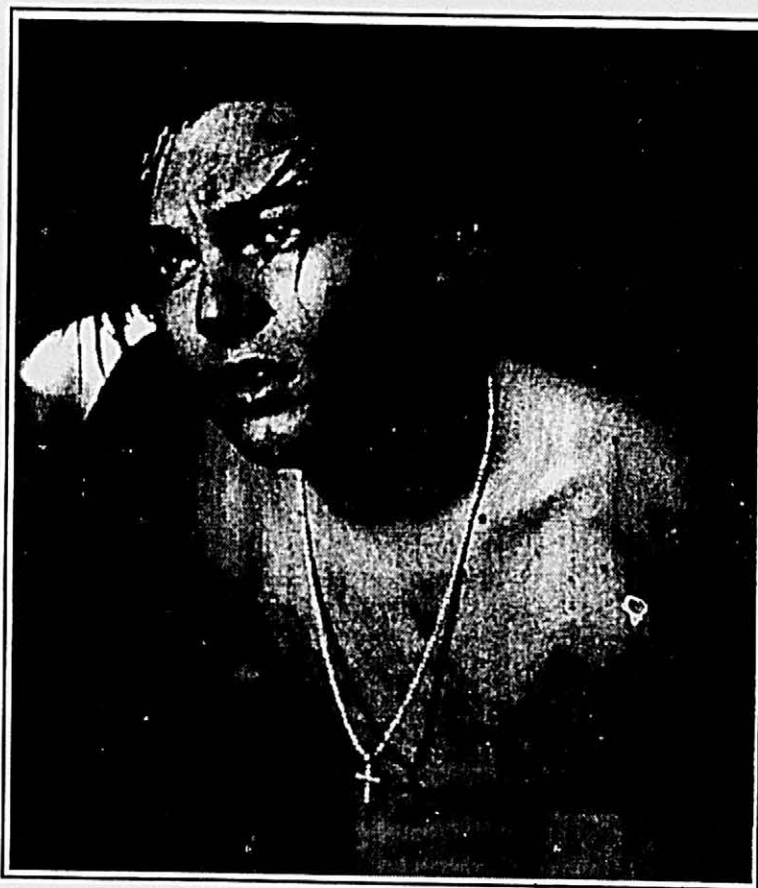
and abandons himself to the role, DiCaprio does the exact opposite. He imposes himself on a role and has the intuitive grace to build a performance from his forthright emotionalism. What separates him from the typical Hollywood star is that he brings more to a part than just shallow charm and sympathetic wit. He's unabashed about being himself, which ac-

Di Caprio needs the fullness of his being to excel. His genius may lie within his own self-consciousness. For Di Caprio is self-conscious, and when detractor John Simon describes him as being "insipidly self-indulgent," he's not exactly wrong. There is an element of self-indulgence in Di Caprio, such as in *Total Eclipse* when he hands a coin to a paraplegic beggar and then smiles smugly at his own generosity. But his self-indulgence (and insipid self-indulgence at that) is integrated into his characterisations. There is always the awareness in his acting that characters like Romeo are no more than self-infatuated teenagers. But their pretentious splendour deifies them, and Di Caprio gratifies their vanity without hiding the illusory essence of their nature. They're deceptively God-like, undeniably human.

As an actor, Di Caprio himself is not without divine stature. In *Romeo and Juliet*, he is Romeo the myth who has existed throughout our culture for centuries. When he's wooing Juliet in the famous balcony scene, he's carrying both the weight of his own emotions and our Shakespearean heritage on his shoulders. But the grandeur of his character doesn't crush him, it propels him. He recites his verses so smoothly, and has such a dignified walk and refined gestures, he's impeccably theatrical and classical. He could have been born out of the text itself.

And yet, at other times, there's a natural simplicity to him which transcends the text itself. When he is falsely informed of Juliet's death, he falls to his knees and lets out a wrenching cry. The moment is pure melodrama, but Di Caprio is so direct, his purity attains cathartic heights. He moves beyond the academic literary character Shakespeare has acquired over the centuries, without betraying the character. He takes control of Romeo, only to be Romeo himself and thus vivify this literary archetype.

It is that very singular quality of being his individual self and reaching into our collective consciousness which makes him so unique. Leonardo Di Caprio seems a spontaneous creation of our imagination. He's so very young, and yet he has grown into the ideal which we all envision the adolescent to be.



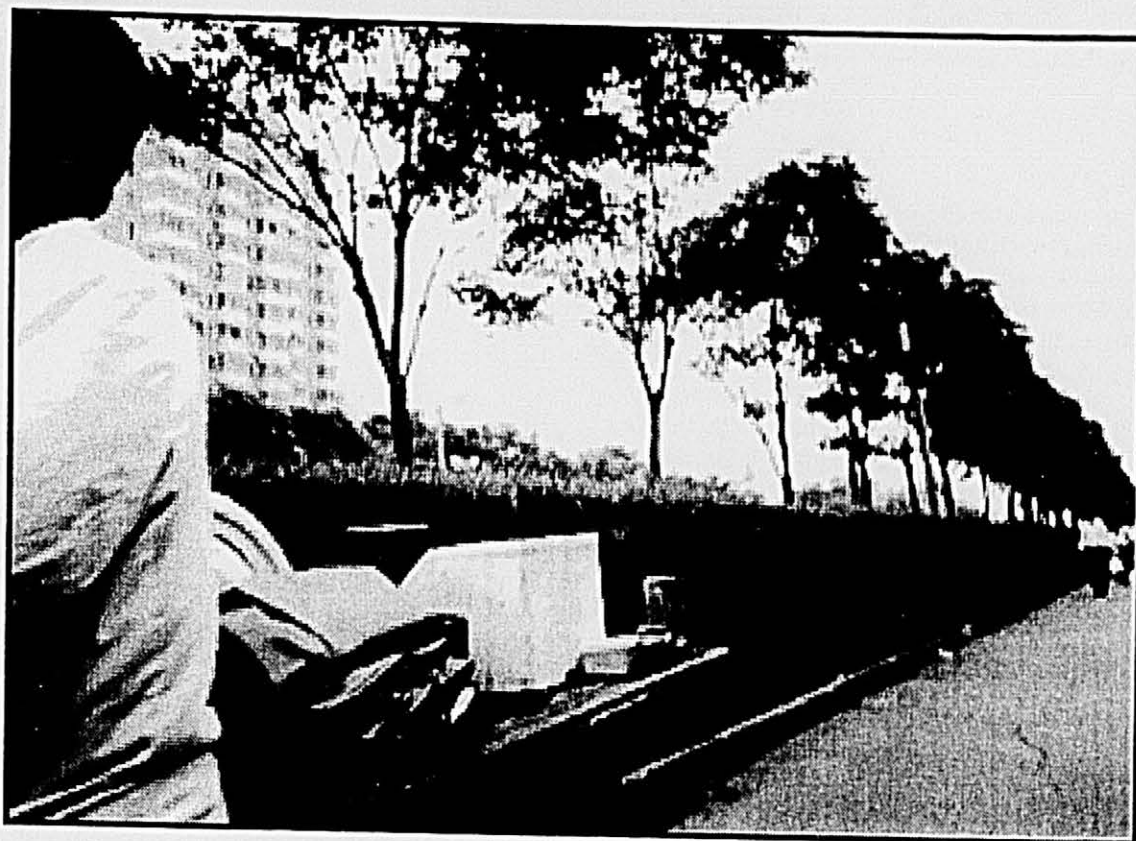
centred intelligence, his caustic wit and daring bravura, gives him a greater range than his contemporaries. He has very much come to represent the gleeful but acerbic, the mournful but resolutely innocent persona of modern-day youth. Yet at the same time, his out-of-this-world, slightly mythical appearance (day-dreaming eyes, self-assured smile, thick wavy hair and handsomeness) gives him a transcendent, eternal appeal: he is a boy for all seasons.

No wonder his rise to fame has been so immediate, all of a sudden the possibilities of his talent seem endless. One imagines him not just as Rimbaud or Romeo, but also as Holden Caulfield or as Julien Sorel, as one of Hermann Hesse's spiritually lost loners or as Stephen Dedalus. He is the portrait of the artist as a young man incarnate.

accounts for the immediacy of impact he has on the screen. Almost unknowingly, he's broken through to a new style of acting, one which will probably make him the most significant presence in American film for years to come.

But unfortunately, the specificity of his technique is also what prevents him from expanding beyond the range of his own personality, as shown with his work in *What's Eating Gilbert Grape?* From a technical standpoint, the acting is flawless. But in playing a good-natured, mentally-handicapped boy, Di Caprio was forced to abandon his more abrasive temperament. He was alienated from himself as an actor, and because of this he could do no more than represent a state of being, without constructing a character for as much.

OFF THE DARKROOM FLOOR...



"Bike path, San Li Tun, Beijing, China"

by Cameron Booth



Research Action

The OMEGA Cohorte: Research that Saves Lives

by meredithcohen

To actively combat HIV in the queer male community, Omega Cohorte is underway in Montréal. The Omega Cohorte is a study focusing on gay and bisexual men who have emotional and sexual relations with other men. The age range of participants is 16-30.

The directors of the study have chosen this group in response to the scant 10% decrease in HIV infection among gay and bisexual men. These statistics directly affect younger men. The Omega Cohorte, however, welcomes volunteers of all ages and backgrounds. The study especially encourages the participation of sex workers and men who are sexually active with other men but who do not consider themselves gay or bisexual.

According to Christian Bédard, the programme aims to

"study the evolution of behaviour and perspectives around issues of HIV positivity and being a gay or bisexual man today."

Most importantly, explains Bédard, "we are trying to save lives. The idea is to investigate the mental functions of safe sex or not practicing it and the economic and emotional factors that play into these behaviours."

The programme is now seeking volunteers. Participants will, over a span of two years, meet with a staffer who is a certified nurse and counselor every six months for anonymous HIV testing and safer sex counseling. There are nine sites across the city, including CLSCs, to ensure accessibility and confidentiality. The results of all testing and the identities of participants are completely anonymous. In addition, participants will be reim-

bursed 15 dollars after every session for transportation costs.

The programme is bilingual and interested men can register by telephone. To further protect the rights and interests of participants, as well as to guarantee sensitivity, 12 members of the gay community will be sitting on the Research and Steering Committee.

Funding for the project was made available by the National Program of Research and Development in Health. Currently the grant has been issued for two years, but there is a strong possibility for renewal and extend-

ing the programme from two years to five to 10 years. To date



Graphics courtesy of the Omega cohorte

there are 400 participants since last summer, but the Cohorte is hoping to have 2,000 participants in all.

While there are several Cohortes worldwide, including sites in Australia, England, and the United States, Montréal's Omega Cohorte is unique because it will place strong emphasis on the psycho-social side of research. Says Bédard, "this study will attempt to answer how people live, think and relate to HIV." It will be an epidemic study.

To register with the Omega Cohorte please call 528-8565 and ask for Patrick or Christine.

CD REVIEWS

Mad in Paris — *Mad in Paris*

(Multi Directional Sound/MCA)

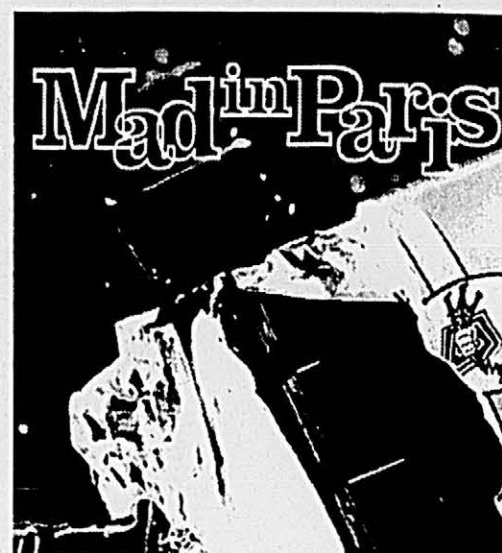
Over the last few years, there's been an increase in French hip hop making its way over to Canada, with artists such as MC Solaar and Alliance Ethnic creating reputations and followings for themselves among the Québec listening audience. Meanwhile, their styles have become increasingly North American, as they've begun to sound more and more like homegrown artists, incorporating the beats and vocal patterns of artists from this side of the Atlantic.

Mad In Paris is no exception to this trend. As Alliance Ethnic has done before them, they use a modern version of the big band sound, giving a festive feeling to the listening experience. This is complimented by the use of some non-musical interludes, similar (in style not content) to those used by North American artists such as Snoop Doggy Dogg. Much of the music itself is a poppier version of American hip hop, combining those beats with funk basslines and the party vocals popularised by George Clinton.

Being an anglophone, and thus listening primarily to English

music, I must admit that when the vocals begin, it sounds a little awkward; you don't expect to hear French in the context of hip hop. It appears that Mad in Paris and the larger French hip hop scene are trying desperately to be like their American counterparts. Besides the language difference, it is difficult to see specific characteristics indigenous to French rap. While rap is an American creation, it would still be pleasing if there were distinctive non-American styles to complement the main stream. However, for the time being we will have to deal with the musical assimilation of the world's rap artists. This certainly doesn't detract from the quality of the music and because of the great calibre of the vocals, very often they blend right into the music and the listener simply doesn't pay attention to them. Perhaps most strikingly impressive is that several of the songs are bilingual — perhaps something we, as a society, can learn from this progressing success.

— dauiddixter



Banco de Gaia — *Live at Glastonbury*

(Mammoth/Planet Dog)

A beast was born in the late '60s that I had always hoped would die out with our parents' generation: progressive rock. Picture bands uglier than the Spin Doctors who played music that (incredibly) sounded worse than Pink Floyd. Prog-rock gave us the 20 minute guitar solo and lyrics about wizards, goblins and castles. Well, fans of ELP, Hawkwind and Asia rejoice: prog-rock has been updated for a whole new generation, and Banco de Gaia are leading the way.

Banco de Gaia is Toby Marks, an English twentysomething who melds samples of 'ethnic' music with keyboards and samplers to yield what is usually referred to, or derided as, "ethno-techno." The over-long solos are still very much to the fore (nine songs, 72 minutes...) but thank-

fully there are no lyrics about wizards and magic. Since this is the '90s, the fantasy angle has been binned in favour of new age-y, one-world bullshit that the original prog-rockers would really have grooved to, man.

Today, this record will probably only appeal to the kind of people who think that we can heal the world by rubbing ourselves down with patchouli and dancing around in a field with an incense stick in each hand. But for other music lovers, all *Live at Glastonbury* has to offer is 70-odd minutes of sampled 'ethnic' voices and instruments thrown over unchallenging, lightweight techno.

I guess you had to be there.

— robjoanisse

Pregnant — *After Dinner Mints*

(Handsome Boy)

Anaesthetised virtuosos Pregnant play dripping sad fingerwork all through the rational anthem to get them through the inevitable fever days. Don't choose this; they've

moody ditties whose pleasure-seeking riffs churn powerfully to the love-sick and head-sick idling vocal track. I wonder if he really is singing from a fetal position. Perhaps *After dinner mints* is about the mood swings of an unstable personality through an hour of real time, like *The Wall*?

Whistling cowboys accompany, as do delicious stray background noises like clinkings, mouth smacks and sighs. Someone is making breakfast. This is because it was recorded in someone's house, in complete takes, and they have to eat. Studio effects are judiciously added later to destabilise the bare organic sound and because this band needs external stimulation (check the chorus: "Happy, Happy, Happy, Happy, Happy, Happy" X 3).

Desperation flares into violence in the kitchen, fading to caustic cynicism by the front door. Clearly the western civilisation, with its plentiful and varied faults and distortions, is the best. Pregnant burns obscurity and anonymity as fuel to feed the ear; listening closely, I am strangely comforted knowing these people will never be famous.

— mulleinbuss



night. I count three guitars, one drum set, an occasional forlorn, plunking piano and a bottle of pills. Winter is coming and everyone is going to need an inspi-

been inside too long.

Too independent for the regular indie act, this collection of prescription-filling rockers has put down 14 consistently

RAS KASS — *Soul on Ice*

(Virgin/EMI)

Representing Oakland, Ras Kass is considered by some to be California's rendition of Nas, while others tote him as the second coming of Rakim. *Soul on Ice*, his debut album, delivers the goods. However, this is not just another rap album. The man is a lyrical acrobat, a cross between Chuck D, Nas and Spice-1, displaying knowledge, extraordinary lyricism and street sensibility. However, his subject matter is more difficult to swallow — after listening to this album, I found that some of Ras Kass' views offended me, others had me questioning my own personal opinions, while others I agreed with. I am not one to simply dismiss an album like this, but I can't fully embrace it either. In a nutshell, I was left feeling both confused and blown away.

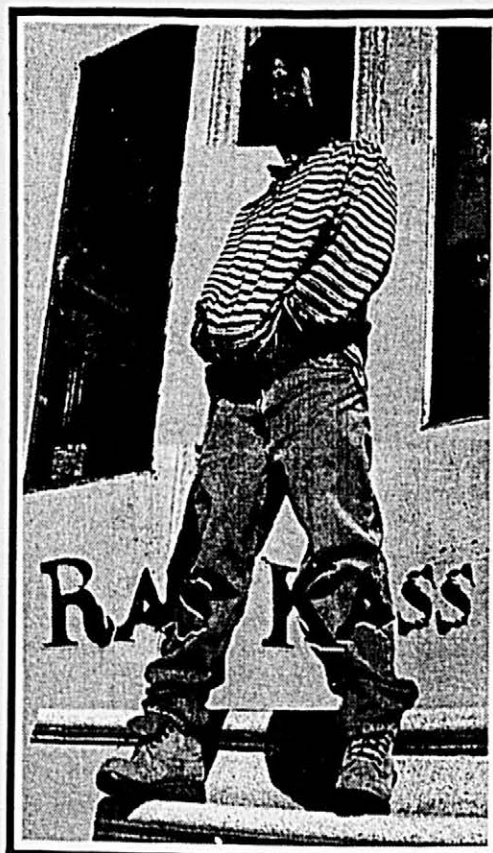
Like his partners, Saafir and Xzibit (a.k.a. the Golden State Warriors), Ras Kass flips verses like no other. He is a linguistic genius, the most articulate and elaborate emcee that I have ever heard, using tricky vocabulary and metaphors to express his controversial opinions. By communicating so much information per second, he forces the listener to pay attention, making it difficult to simply bob to the music, since there is so much to absorb lyrically.

On "Nature of the Threat," Kass raps continuously for eight minutes, shedding light on eurocentric history and how he believes it gave rise to racism, disease and homo/bi-sexuality: *Rome sold every citizen into slavery/the first genocide in his-*

tory and more bi-sexuality in sight/ Julius Caesar was known as every woman's husband and every man's wife. In placing sexuality alongside racism and disease, Ras Kass reveals a blatant homo/biphobia that I don't agree with.

However, his other views are less easy to dismiss: *Stealing land from the indigenous natives/gave them alcohol to keep the red man intoxicated/whites claim that they had to civilise these pagan animals/ but up until 1848 there's documented cases of whites being the savage cannibals/eating Indians, in 1992 it's Jeffrey Dahmer.* Posing and answering questions in the same breath and incorporating poetic skills with facts, opinions and analogies, Ras Kass believes that history could in fact only be his-story. The result is an intensive lesson — whether you agree with it or not — leaving you in a state of perplexity, anger, appreciation, uncertainty, self-evaluation and awe.

— michaelterzian





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Monday, November 18, 1996

McGill University, Union Building
3480 McTavish, room 107

11:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Cummings House-FEDERATION CJA
5151 Cote St. Catherine Rd., 4th floor
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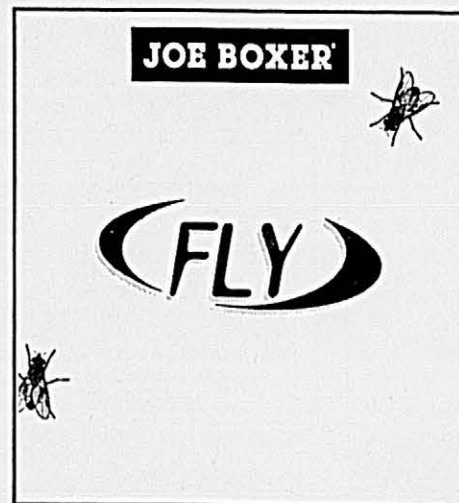
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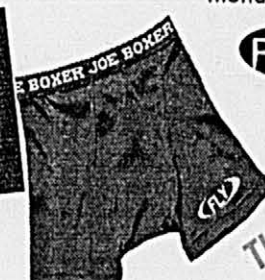
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Monday, Nov. 18, 1996